

PROCEEDINGS OF LEARNED SOCIETIES.

ROYAL SOCIETY.

January 10, 1867.—Lieut.-General Sabine, President, in the Chair.

“On the Appendicular Skeleton of the Primates.” By St. George Mivart, F.Z.S., Lecturer on Comparative Anatomy at St. Mary’s Hospital.

The author began by mentioning the principal variations found in the order Primates, as to the absolute and relative length of the pectoral limb with and without the manus; and then taking each bone separately, described the modifications undergone by each in all the genera of the order*, as also the relative size of the segments and bones of the limb compared to each other and to the spine. The pelvic limb was then similarly treated of, and, in addition, its segments and bones were compared with the homotypal segments and bones of the pectoral limb.

The author after this reconsidered the question as to the use of the terms “hand” and “foot,” and the applicability of the term “Quadrumanous” to Apes and Lemuroids.

He controverted the position lately assumed by Dr. Lucaet†, that both anatomically and physiologically the pes of apes is more like the human hand than the human foot. At the same time he recommended the use of unambiguous homological terms, such as “manus” and “pes” (already adopted by some) instead of “hand” and “foot,” in all treatises on comparative anatomy.

Tables of the dimensions and proportions of the limbs, their segments, and bones were then given, exhibiting the variations presented in these respects throughout the whole series of genera.

The author then considered the more peculiar forms of the order, beginning with Man.

The principal resemblances and differences in form, size, and proportion between the human appendicular skeleton and that of other primates were given in detail, followed by a list of those points in which man differs, as to the bony structure of his limbs, from all other primates.

The limb-skeletons of the Orang, Marmoset, Indri, Slender Lemur, Tarsier, and Aye-aye were then similarly reviewed, and lists given of the absolute peculiarities found in each.

The conclusion arrived at from these comparisons was, that Man differs less from the higher Apes than do certain primates below him from each other, and that he, *thus judged*, evidently takes his place amongst the members of the suborder *Anthropoidea*.

* Except certain Lemuroids, of which no specimens exist in this country.

† Abhandlungen von der Senckenbergischen Naturforschenden Gesellschaft (Frankfort, 1865), vol. v. p. 275.